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STATISTICAL SUMMARY

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS, U. S. D. A.

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MARCH 14, 1946

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THE MEAT PROSPECT

Number of all cattle on farms January 1 roughly 80 million; milk cows, heifers and heifer calves 39 million; beef cows, heifers and calves 32 million; steers 7 million; bulls 2 million.

Number of cattle and calves on feed January 1 estimated 4,157,000, about 4 percent less than year previous. Number of sheep and lambs on feed for market estimated 6,724,000, about 2 percent below year previous.

Production of dressed meat under Federal inspection during 1945: beef 7.2 billion pounds, veal .8 billion, pork excluding lard, 6.4 billion, lamb and mutton .9 billion pounds. Total dressed meat 15.4 billion pounds, compared with 17.9 billion in 1944 and 10.7 billion average 1935-39. Total meat production in 1946 expected to be moderately above 1945 and more than 40 percent above the 1935-39 average of 16.2 billion pounds (total production). More hogs to be slaughtered; fall pig crop was 12 percent over previous fall and spring crop this year probably will be slightly over last spring. Beef output will be heavy, but lamb and mutton less than last year.

FOOD CONSUMPTION PER CAPITA

Apparent civilian consumption of all meats in 1945 was 131.5 pounds per capita, compared with 149.6 pounds in 1944 and 125.6 pounds for the 1935-39 average. Per capita consumption of eggs 48.8 pounds in 1945 compared with 43.9 year previous and 37.3 average. Chicken, dressed weight, 24.6 pounds in 1945 compared with 23.6 year previous and 17.9 average. Total milk 802 pounds in 1945 compared with 788 year previous and 801 average. Butter 10.5 pounds in 1945 compared with 12 pounds year previous and 16.7 average. Total fats and oils 41.9 pounds in 1945 compared with 44.6 year previous and 48 average. Citrus fruits 65.7 pounds in 1945 compared with 67.8 year previous and 48.8 average. Fresh vegetables 270 pounds in 1945 compared with 255 year previous and 235 average. Sugar 73.2 pounds in 1945 compared with 89 year previous and 96.5 average. Wheat flour 161.4 pounds in 1945 compared with 161 year previous and 153.1 average.

RAPID CONSUMPTION**OF PEANUT CROP**

Farmers' stock peanuts cleaned and shelled, September through January, totaled 909 million pounds, largest quantity on record for a like period, 137 million pounds over same period last year. Peanuts crushed during January

19 million pounds, compared with 16 million year ago. Holdings of farmers' stock peanuts in commercial positions January 31 were 638 million pounds, about 20 percent under year ago. Output of shelled, edible peanuts in January 119 million pounds, 20 million over December and largest output on record for January. About 55 percent of this went into peanut butter. Visible supply of all peanuts in commercial positions January 31, equivalent farmers' stock basis, 912 million pounds, about 10 percent under year earlier and smallest quantity this date since 1942.

MILK PRODUCTION FALLING SLIGHTLY

Milk production during February 8.3 billion pounds, 2 percent under year earlier but 9 percent above 1935-44 February average. Milk produced per cow on March 1 averaged 14.28 pounds, the highest in 22 years of record, 2 percent over year previous and 8 percent above March 1 average. Grain shortages now looming in many eastern areas. Milk production during 1945 was record, 122.2 billion pounds, more than 3 percent above 1944 output of 118.6 billion. The previous record was 119.2 billion in 1942. Production in 1945 per capita of the population (including all armed forces) averaged 875 pounds, about 8 percent above per capita average for 15 years pre-war.

Number of milk cows in 1945 averaged about 25.5 million head, down about 400,000 from the 1944 peak. Cow numbers were rising from 1938 to 1944 but turned downward in some States in late 1943. Decline became general in 1945, amounting to more than 3 percent in the year, sharpest decline on record. Milk cow numbers now about back to mid-1942.

Production of milk per cow last year was 4,789

pounds, 214 pounds above 1944 and highest in the 21 years of record. Production of butterfat per cow was 190 pounds in 1945 compared with 182 pounds the previous year and 172 pounds for the 1925-39 average. Wisconsin, leading milk State, produced 15.4 billion pounds during 1945, Minnesota 8.6 billion, New York 8.1 billion, Iowa 6.8 billion, Illinois 5.8 billion, Michigan and California 5.7 billion each.

EGG OUTPUT STILL HEAVY

Hens laid 4,954 million eggs in February, 3 percent more than year ago and 45 percent above 10-year February average 1935-44. Egg production, however, was down 8 percent below the record of

PARITY PRICES FOR FARM PRODUCTS AND ACTUAL PRICES RECEIVED

COMMODITY AND UNIT	ACTUAL PRICE		PARITY PRICE
	JAN. 15 1946	FEB. 15 1946	
Wheat, bu.	dol.	1.54	1.55
Corn, bu.	dol.	1.10	1.11
Peanuts, lb.	ct.	8.37	8.43
Cotton, lb.	ct.	22.36	23.01
Potatoes, bu.	dol.	1.45	1.46
Hogs, 100 lb.	dol.	14.10	14.20
Beef cattle, 100 lb. . .	dol.	11.80	12.60
Veal calves, 100 lb. . .	dol.	13.60	13.90
Lambs, 100 lb.	dol.	13.00	13.30
Butterfat, lb.	ct.	50.7	50.8
Milk, wholesale, 100 lb. .	dol.	3.37	3.33
Chickens, live, 1b. . . .	ct.	23.5	23.1
Eggs, doz.	ct.	41.1	32.6

¹Adjusted for seasonal variation.

February 1944. The heavy egg output this February was result of a 4 percent increase per hen, which more than offset a 1 percent decrease in number of layers. Eggs per hen in February averaged 12.2 compared with 11.7 year ago and 9.7 average.

Farm flocks averaged 407 million layers in February, 1 percent under ago but 18 percent above 10-year February average. Number of layers fewer than last year in all parts of country except North Atlantic and Far West.

Sales of chickens from farms in 1945 totaled 2,244 million pounds live weight, 1 percent under 1944 and 12 percent below record sales of 2,559 million pounds in 1943. Commercial broiler sales, not included in these estimates, totaled more than 900 million pounds in 1945. Sales of young chickens in 1945 were 13 percent more than in 1944 because 10 percent more chickens were raised. Sales of mature chickens, however, were 10 percent less than in 1944, which left an inventory 3 percent larger January 1, 1946 than year previous.

Cost of typical poultry ration in mid-February was \$3.02 per cwt., 4 cents over January and 16 cents over year ago. Egg-feed prices are considerably less favorable to egg production than year ago or average.

HEAVY WINTER FEEDING OF GRAIN

Disappearance of corn, oats and barley combined during October-December 1945 was 9 percent above like quarter of 1944. Quantity of wheat used as feed since July substantially less than the record quantity fed during like period of 1943 but more than in most earlier years. Stocks of corn, oats and barley on farms and terminal markets January 1 totaled 74.5 million tons, 2 percent less than year earlier. Corn and barley stocks small but oats largest on record.

NUMBER FARM WORKERS

STILL SHRINKING

Number of farm workers increasing seasonally but still fewer than last year. Number farm workers February 1 totaled 7,799,000, compared with 8,051,000 a year ago. Number hired workers 1,424,000, about 5 percent less than year ago. Number of family workers 6,375,000, about 3 percent under year ago. For comparison, the average number of farm workers 1935-39 was 10,920,000, which included 8,353,000 family workers and 2,567,000 hired workers. The average number of workers 1910-14 was 12,052,000, which included 9,160,000 family and 2,892,000 hired workers. These pre-war figures are straight averages (not February figures).

The number of World War II veterans placed on farms under the Farm Labor Program during December was 4,883, and for the entire year 1945

was 34,368. Of these latter 31,736 were placed as hired hands, the rest as tenants or sharecroppers.

Number of foreign workers employed on farms February 1: Mexicans, chiefly in Arizona and California, 19,797; Jamaicans, chiefly in Florida and Connecticut 4,885; Bahamians, chiefly in Florida, 2,826; British Honduras in Florida 132; Newfoundlanders, chiefly in New England and New York 725. Total foreign workers 28,382.

FARM INCOME

Total receipts to farmers from products sold during December 1,791 million dollars, compared with 1,747 million dollars year earlier. The figure this December included 16 million dollars of Government payments, compared with 50 million dollars Government payments year previous. Total receipts for the year 1945 were 21,468 million dollars, compared with 21,038 million dollars in 1944. The 1945 figure included 769 million dollars of Government payments, compared with 810 million of Government payments in 1944.

FARMERS PLAN LARGE ACREAGE

Farmers' plans for spring planting, reported as of March 1, indicate total of principal crops this year 357½ acres, compared with 357 million last year and 355 million average of previous 10 years. Feed grains and sorghums up 1/3 million acres or 0.2 percent in plans; food grains up about 2 percent, over last year. These of course are merely farmers' intentions.

Crops for which increased acreage is intended: corn 0.1 percent, spring wheat 1.6 percent, oats 2.7 percent, barley 0.8 percent, rice 3.8 percent, sugar beets 20.4 percent, tobacco 5.9 percent. Crops for

which decreased acreage is indicated: flaxseed 14 percent, potatoes 5.4 percent, sweet potatoes 0.5 percent, dry beans 5 percent, dry field peas 12.5 percent, soy beans grown alone 11.7 percent, cowpeas 9.2 percent, peanuts 5 percent, all compared with acreages planted year ago.

MARKETING MARGINS

Charges for marketing a family market basket of farm food products amounted to \$224 in December, same as November. The retail cost of a year's market basket was \$466 in December, compared with \$463 in November. Price received by farmers for this market basket stood at \$258 in December, compared with \$253 in November.

For more detailed information, write the Division of Economic Information, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C., or telephone Republic 4142 — Branch 4407.

CURRENT INDEXES FOR AGRICULTURE		
INDEX NUMBERS	BASE PERIOD	FEB. 1946
Prices received by farmers . . .	1910-14 = 100	207
Prices paid by farmers, interest and taxes	1910-14 = 100	178
Parity ratio	1910-14 = 100	116
Wholesale prices of food . . .	1910-14 = 100	167
Retail prices of food	1910-14 = 100	¹ 182
Farm wage rates	1910-14 = 100	¹ 347
Weekly factory earnings . . .	1910-14 = 100	² 369
RATIOS	LONG-TIME FEB. — AVERAGE	FEB. 1946
Hog-corn ratio, U. S.	12.6	12.8
Butterfat-feed ratio, U. S. . .	24.6	28.5
Milk-feed ratio, U. S.	1.28	1.44
Egg-feed ratio, U. S.	11.7	10.8
PRODUCTION COMPARISONS	JAN.-DEC. 1944	JAN.-DEC. 1945
Milk, (Bil. lb.)	119	123.3
Eggs, (Bil.)	57.9	55.2
Beef, (Dr. wt., mil. lb.) . .	6,655	7,240
Lamb & Mutton (Dr. wt., mil. lb.) . .	887	913
Pork & Lard (Mil. lb.) . . .	12,698	8,189
All meats (Dr. wt., mil. lb.) . .	21,166	17,165

¹ January figure. Food price December figure.
² Factory pay roll per employed worker adjusted for seasonal variation. December figure.